The Empire's New Clothes:

A Century of British COIN Doctrine & its Relevance to Contemporary Threats

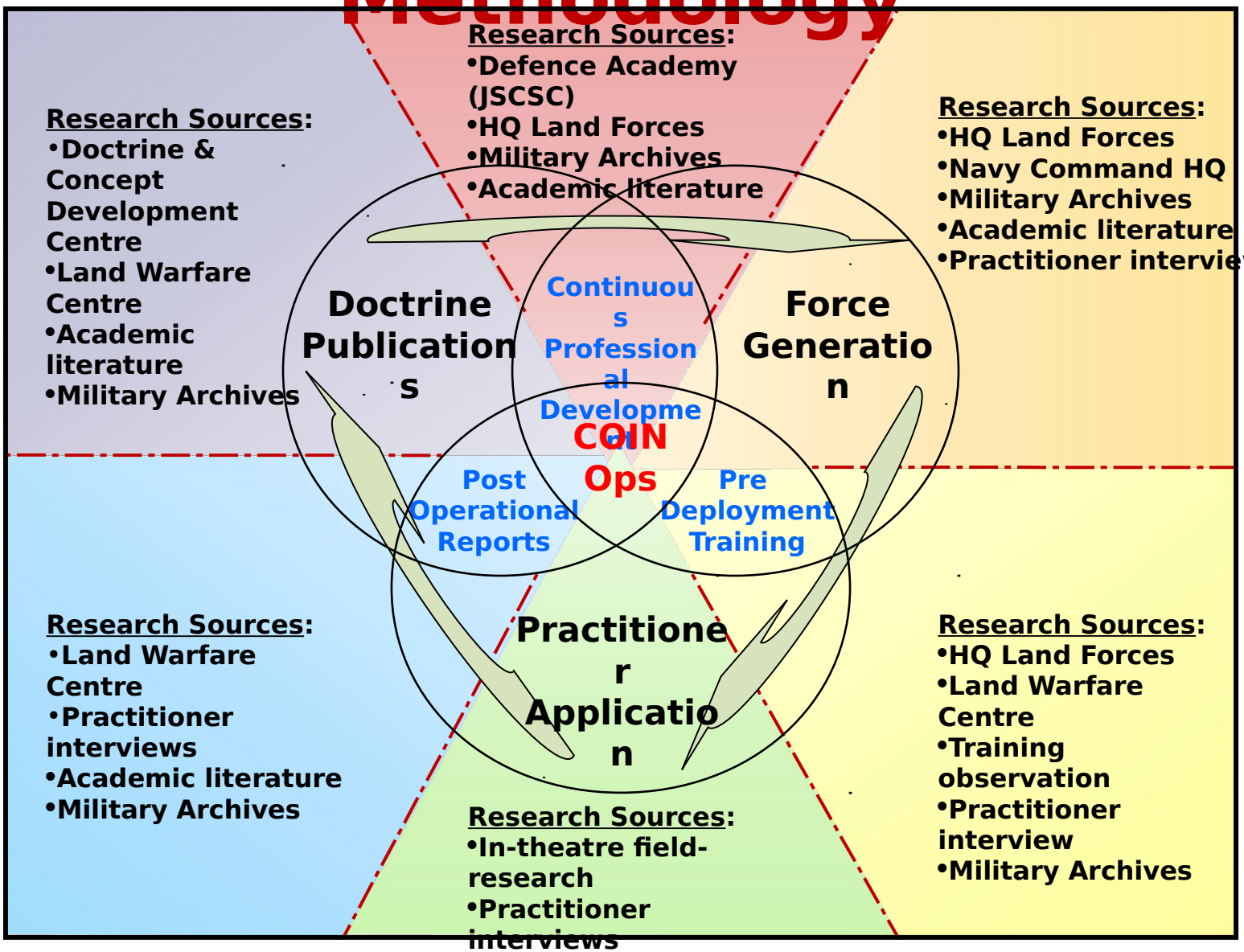
John COLLINS

18 February 2010

Scope

- **Research Thesis & Methodology**
- **British COIN: Experiential Genealogy**
- **British Military Doctrine Development**
- **Balancing the COIN Equation**
- **AFM Pt 10: Relevance to Contemporary Threats**
- **Case Study: ‘UK Experience in Helmand’**
- **Conclusions**

Research Thesis & Methodology



Definitional Overload

‘The first, the supreme, the most far-reaching act of judgement that the statesman and Commander have to make is to establish… the kind of war on which they are embarking: neither mistaking it for, nor trying to turn it into, something that is alien to its nature. This is the first of all strategic questions and the most comprehensive.’

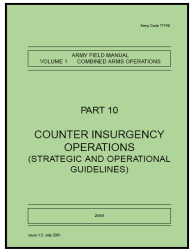
Carl Von Clausewitz

‘In all fighting, the direct method may be used for joining battle, but indirect methods will be needed in order to secure victory.’

‘Water shapes its course according to the nature of the ground over which it flows; the soldier works out his victory in relation to the foe he is facing. Therefore, just as water retains no constant shape, so in warfare there are no constant conditions.’

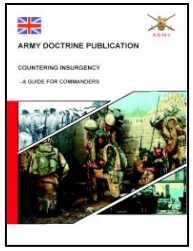
Sun Tsu

Insurgency: Definitional Ambiguity



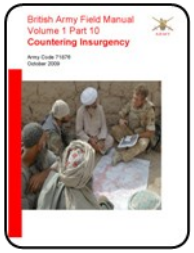
'The actions of a minority group within a state who are intent on forcing political change by means of a mixture of subversion, propaganda and military pressure, aiming to persuade or intimidate the broad mass of people to accept such a change.'

AFM Vol 1, Pt 10 (2001) – Counter Insurgency



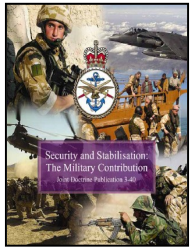
'A strategy adopted in an internal conflict by a minority group intent on forcing political change by a mixture of subversion, propaganda and military pressure aiming to persuade or intimidate the broad mass of the people to accept such change.'

ADP Draft (2007) – COIN Commander's Guide



'An organised, violent subversion used to effect or prevent political control, as a challenge to established authority.'

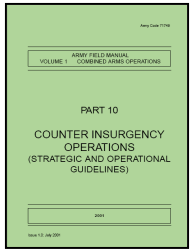
AFM Vol 1, Pt 10 (2009) – Countering Insurgency



'A strategy of organised subversion and violence used by a group(s) to effect or prevent political control of a region, as a challenge to governance and authority, through persuasion and coercion of the population(s).'

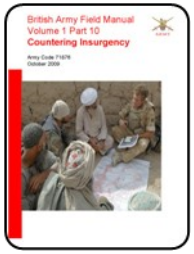
JDP 3-40 (2009) – Security & Stabilisation

COIN: Definitional Clarity



'Those military, paramilitary, political, economic, psychological and civil actions taken by a Government to defeat insurgency.'

AFM Vol 1, Pt 10 (2001) – Counter Insurgency



'Those military, law enforcement, political, economic, psychological and civic actions taken to defeat insurgency, while addressing the root causes.'

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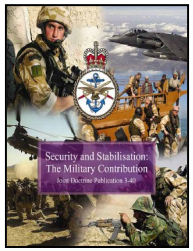

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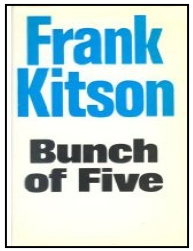
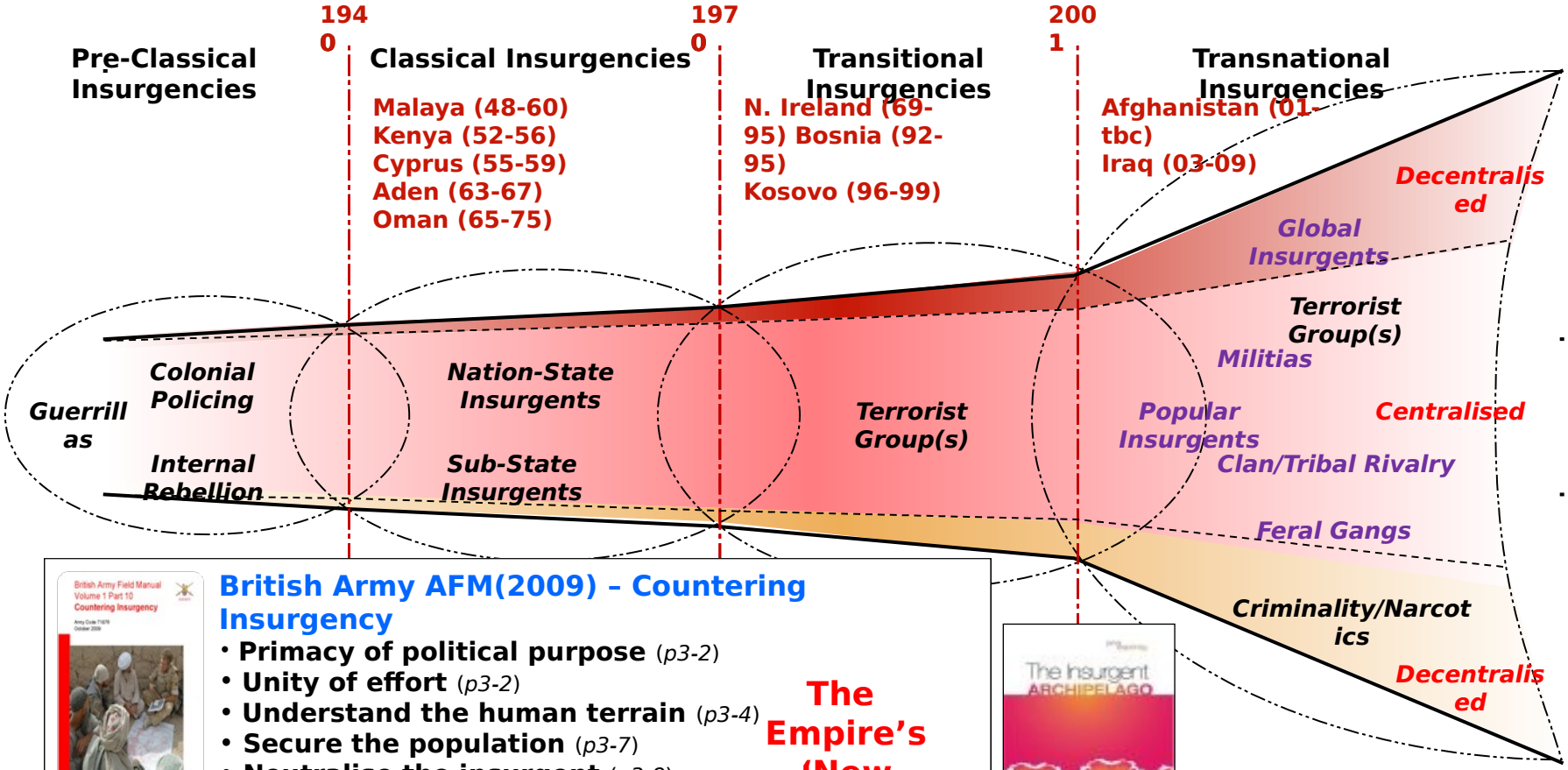


'The first thing that must be apparent when contemplating the sort of action which a government facing insurgency should take, is that there is no such thing as purely military solution because insurgency is not primarily a military activity.'

Frank Kitson – Bunch of Five (1977)

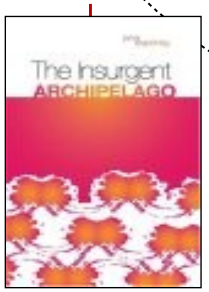
British COIN Experiential Genealogy



British Army AFM(2009) – Countering Insurgency

- **Primacy of political purpose** (*p3-2*)
- **Unity of effort** (*p3-2*)
- **Understand the human terrain** (*p3-4*)
- **Secure the population** (*p3-7*)
- **Neutralise the insurgent** (*p3-8*)
- **Gain & maintain popular support** (*p3-10*)
- **Operate in accordance with the law** (*p3-13*)
- **Integrate Intelligence** (*p3-14*)
- **Prepare for the long-term** (*p3-15*)
- **Learn & adapt** (*p3-16*)

The Empire's 'New Clothes'



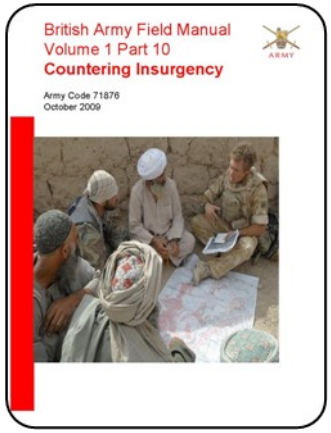
UK COIN Principles: A Periodic Table

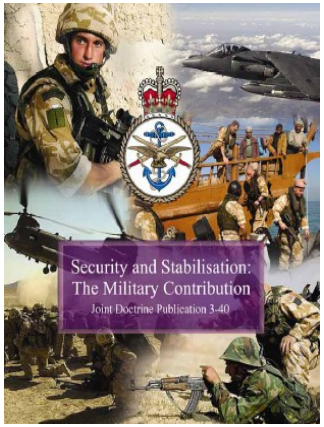
Callwell (1906)	Gwynn (1934)	Thompson (1966)	Land Ops (1969)	Kitson (1977)	Land Ops (1977)	AFM Pt 10 (2001)	ADP (2007)	JDP 3-40 (2009)	AFM Pt 10 (2009)
Clear & well defined objective	Gov't policy must be loyally carried out	Government must have clear political aim	National plan with civil authority		Political Awareness	Political primacy & political aim	Political primacy & political aim	Primacy of political purpose	Primacy of political purpose
Gov't & military systems	Military & civil cooperation	Government must have an overall plan	Coordinated Government action	Coordinated machinery at every level	Civil & military cooperation	Coordinated Government machinery	Coordinated Government machinery	Unity of effort	Unity of effort
		Government must function within the law		Maintain an adequate legal system	Conduct operations within the law				Operate in accordance with the law
	Min amount of military force		Minimum use of necessary force		Minimum use of necessary force				
Intelligence	Firm & timely action	Security & intelligence	Security & Intelligence	Intelligence syste suit circu s	Intelligence &	Intelligence & information	Focussed intelligence	Understand the context	Integrate intelligence
Enemy habits, customs & MO must be studied		Prioritise defeat of subversion not the guerrilla					Effective communicatio n with population	Focus on the population	Understand the human terrain
Do not punish villagers	Public opinion & popular support	In the guerrilla phase, secure base area first	Public opinion & popular support	Ensure INS do not win the war for population	Popular support		Gain & secure consent & spt of the people	Gain consent & maintain credibility	Gain & maintain popular support
						Neutralise the insurgent	Neutralise the insurgent	Neutralise & isolate irregular actors	Neutralise the insurgent
						Separate the INS from the			
Sub-divide the theatre; with a commander									Secure the population

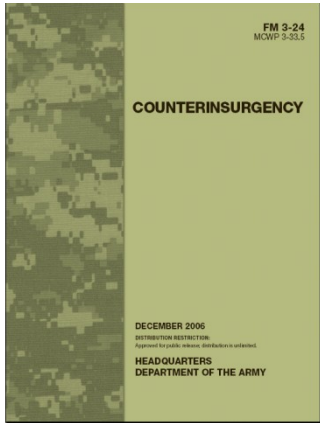
41 Years!

← 32 Years! →

The Empire's New Clothes







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US Army/USMC FM 3-24 (2006) – Counterinsurgency

COIN Principles:

- **Legitimacy is the main objective** (*p1-21*)
- **Political factors are primary** (*p1-22*)
- **Unity of effort is essential** (*p1-22*)
- **Understand the environment** (*p1-22*)
- **Insurgent s must be isolated from cause & support** (*p1-23*)
- **Security under the rule of law is essential** (*p1-23*)
- **Intelligence drives operations** (*p1-23*)
- **Prepare for a long-term commitment** (*p1-24*)

Contemporary Imperatives:

- **Use the appropriate level of force** (*p1-25*)
- **Learn & Adapt** (*p1-26*)
- **Empower the lowest levels** (*p1-26*)
- **Support the host-nation** (*p1-26*)

Preparing for the Long-Term

‘Let it be said of times to come: after decades of violence, years of talks, weeks of stalemate, this is the day that we have secured the future’… ‘We are closing the last chapter of a long and troubled story and we are opening a new chapter for Northern Ireland’

Prime Minister Gordon Brown
5 February 2010

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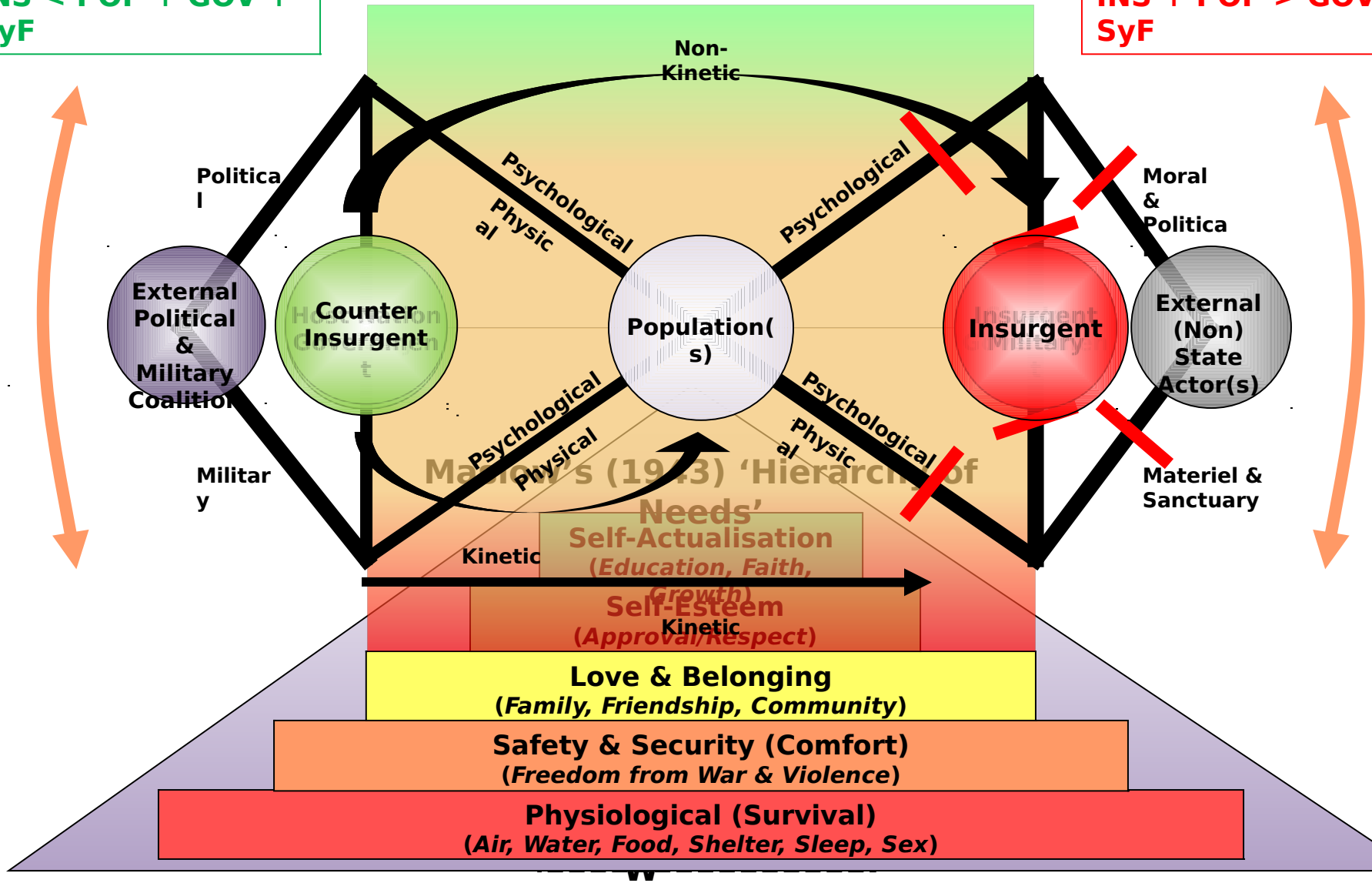
Balancing the COIN Equation

INS < POP + GOV + SyF

INS + POP > GOV + SyF



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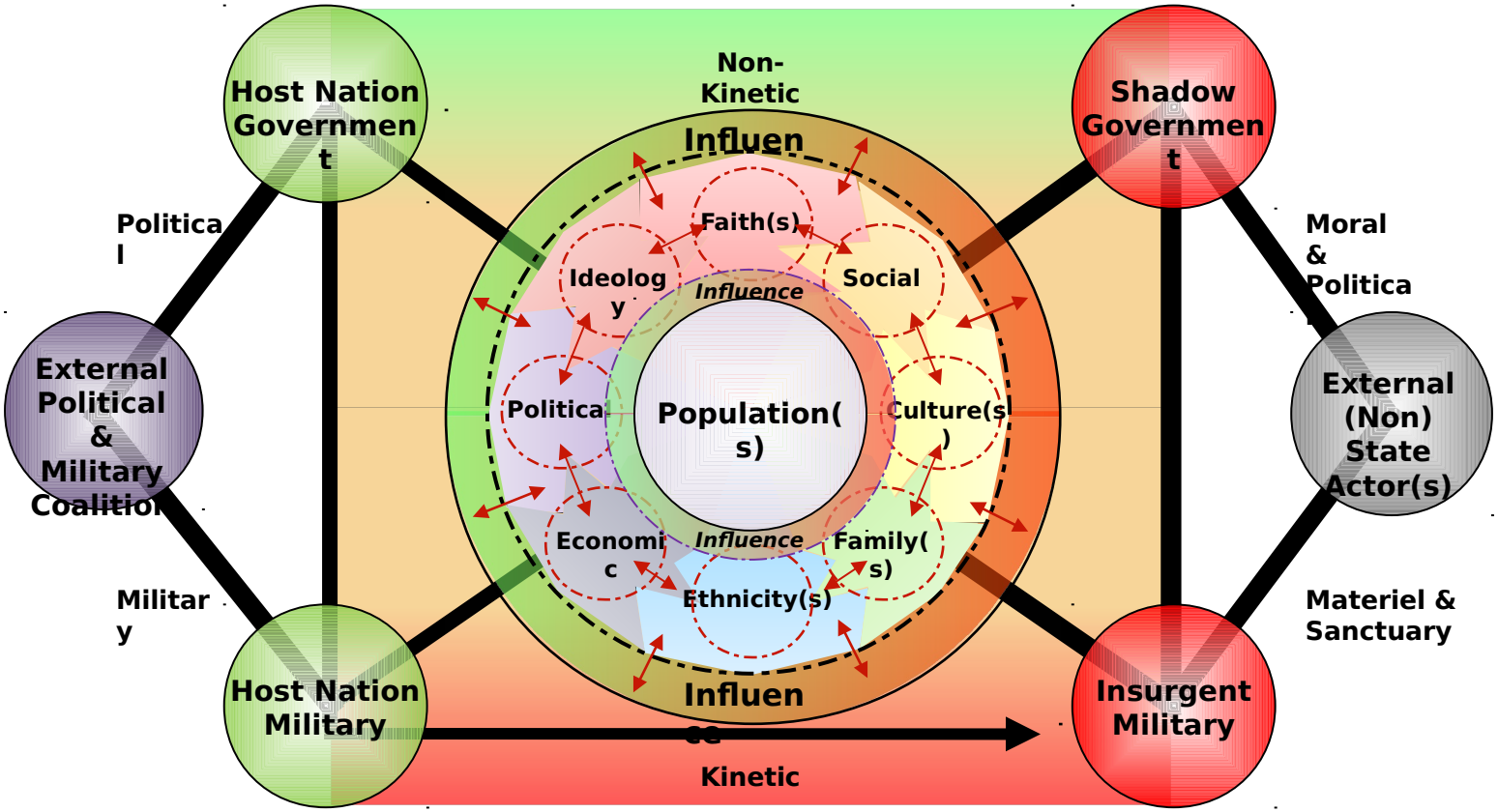
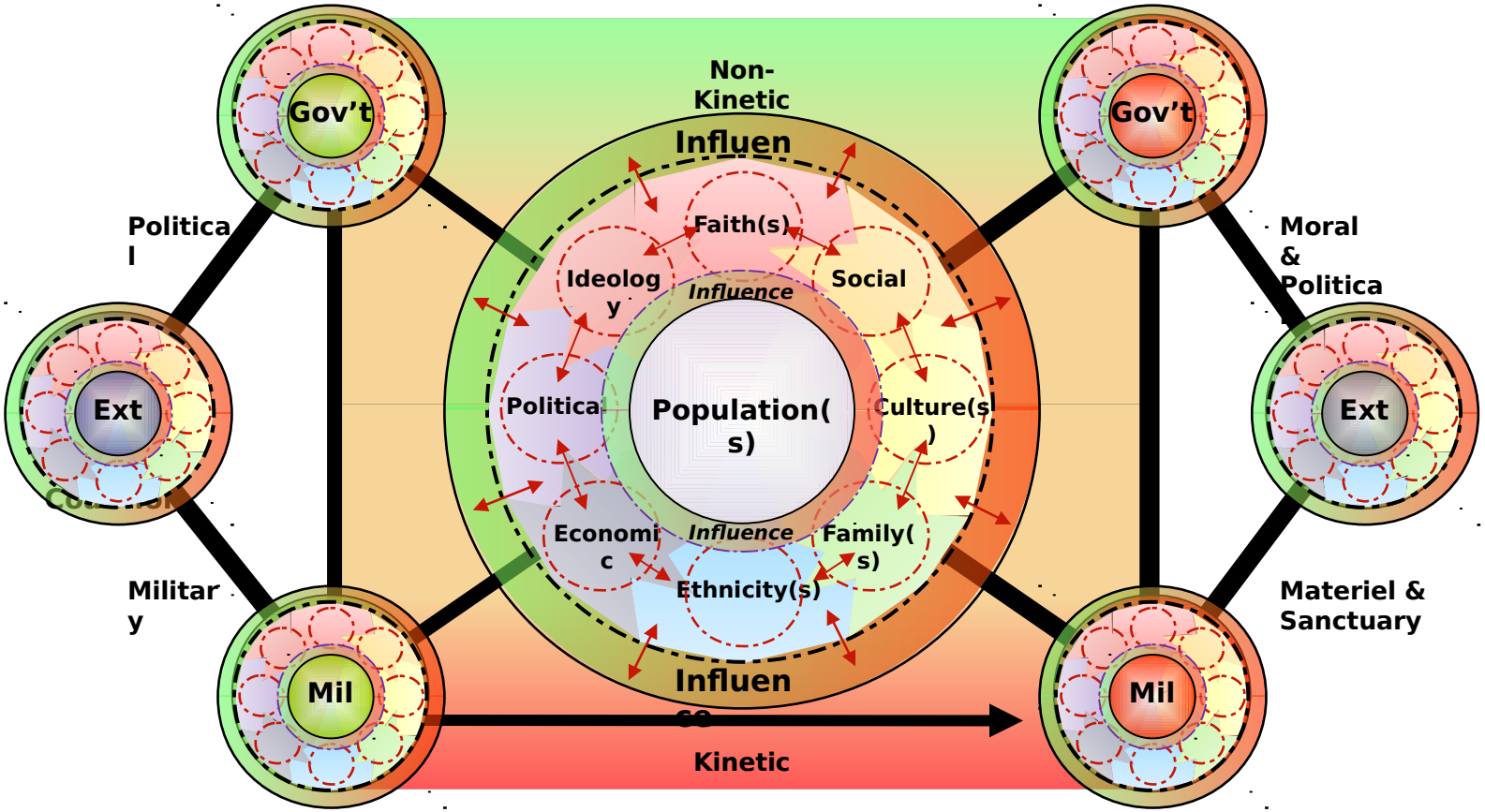


The COIN Kaleidoscope

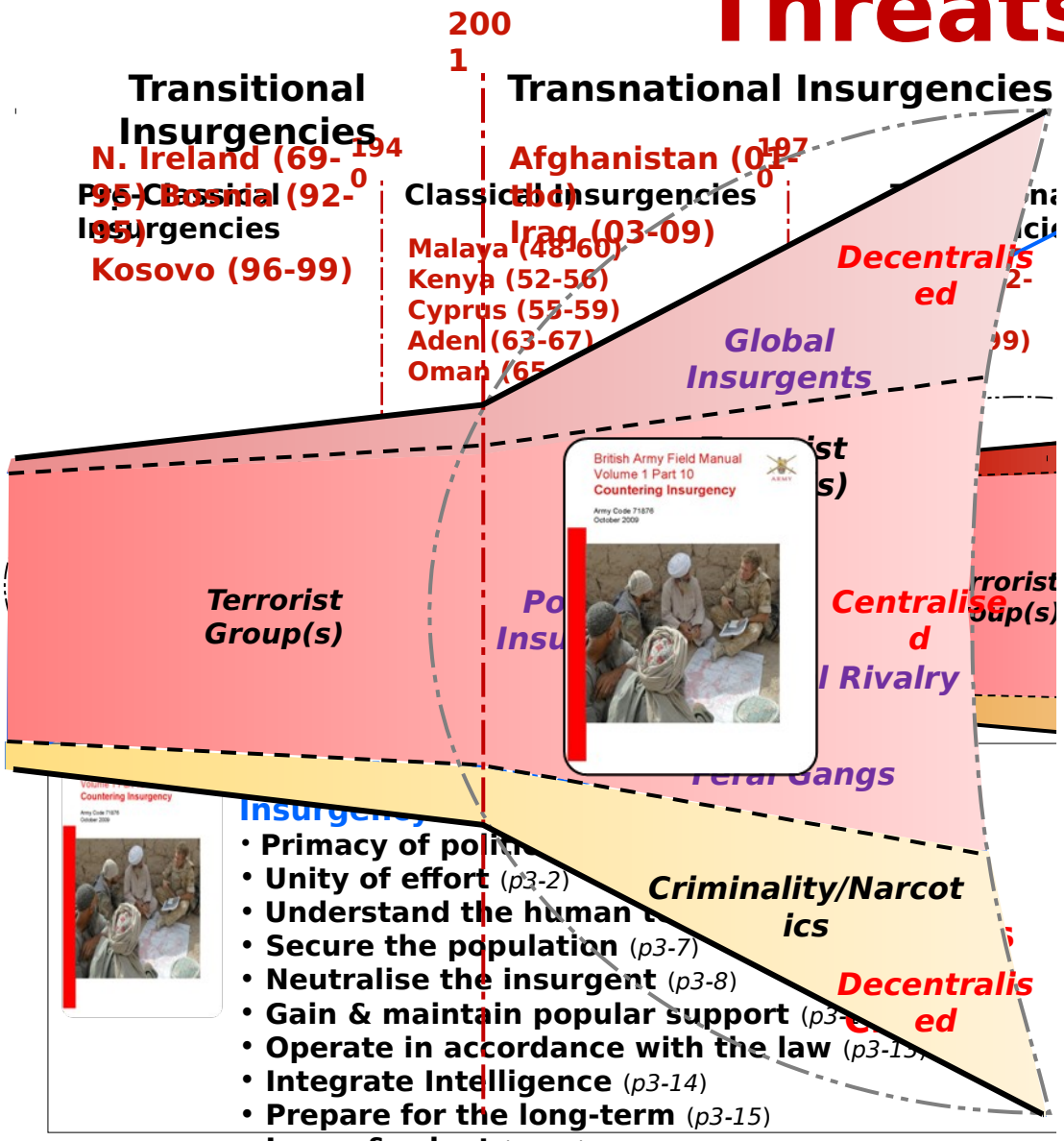


Revised COIN Equations:

From: **INS < GOV + POP + SyF**
To: **INS < GOVS + ∞(POPS) + SyF**

From: **INS + POP > GOV + SyF**
To: **INS + ∞(POPS) > GOV + SyF**

Relevance to Contemporary Threats



Empire's New Clothes?

Strengths:

- Enduring and proven principles
- Academic & practitioner input
- Reader-friendly text & graphics

Weaknesses:

- Insurgent equation has changed
- Still popular insurgency-centric
- Lack of Comprehensive Approach
- Predominantly military-centric
- Still kinetically focussed
- Negligible cultural

Study: UK Experience in Helmand

Northern Ireland *(69-07)*:

- Area: 13,843 square km
- Population: 1.6 million
- N/S Border: 360 km
- British Military: 28,000*
- Pop/SyF Ratio: **57:1**

Afghanistan *(01-ongoing)*:

- Area: 647,500 square km
- Population: 28.4 million
- Total Border: 5529 km
- AFG/PAK Border: 2430 km
- AFG/Iran Border: 936 km
- Coalition Military: 85,795**
- ANA: 100,130***

*** Summer 1972 - Op MOTORMAN (peak of the campaign). Largest deployment of British infantry troops since WW2.**

**** Coalition Composition (as at 1 Feb 10) - 43 Nations: US: 47,500 (+), UK: 9,500 (CAN: 2830, NL: 1940).**

***** ISAF figures for ANA as at 22 Dec 09.**

• David Galula's (1963) recommended Population/Security Force ratios: 10-20:1

Study: UK Experience in Helmand

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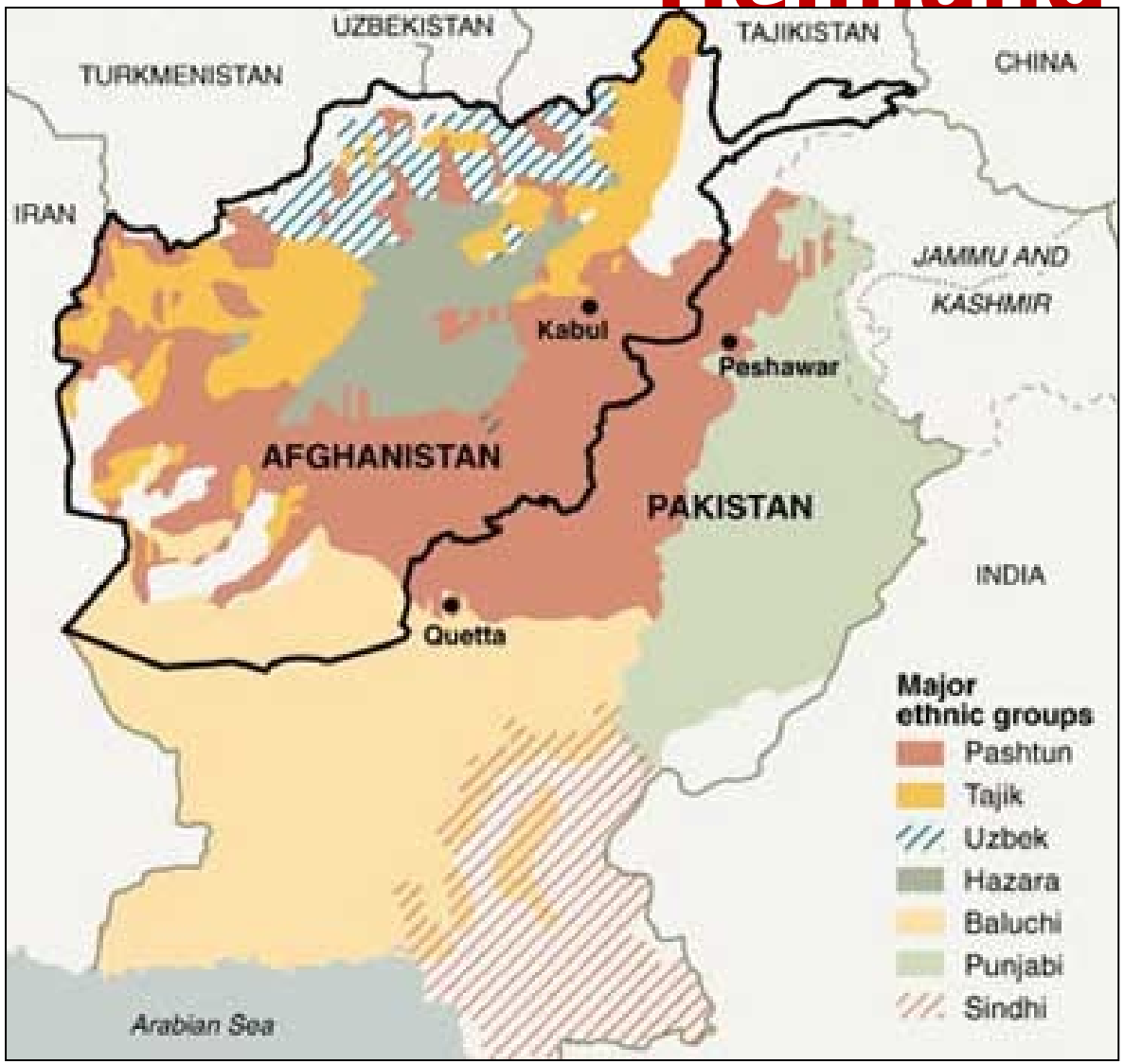

Macro Strategic Factors:

- **DURAND Line**:
  - False border
  - Non-tribal lines
- **Tribal Disposition**:
  - Extend externally
  - Border recognition
- **Tribal Actors:**
  - Emerging Baluch
- **State Actors**:
  - Multiple interests
  - Pakistan
  - Russia
  - China
  - Iran
- **Regional Geo-Wealth**:
  - Gas
  - Oil
  - Minerals

Study: UK Experience in Helmand

Macro Strategic Considerations:

- **DURAND Line**:
  - False Borders versus Tribal Areas
  - Transient/porous border and POP
- **Transnational Support**:
  - Sympathisers, Finance, Faith
  - New 21st Century Great Game?
- **Internal/External Influence**:
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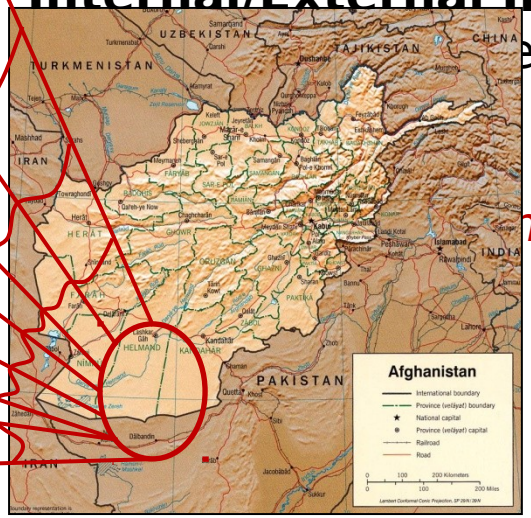
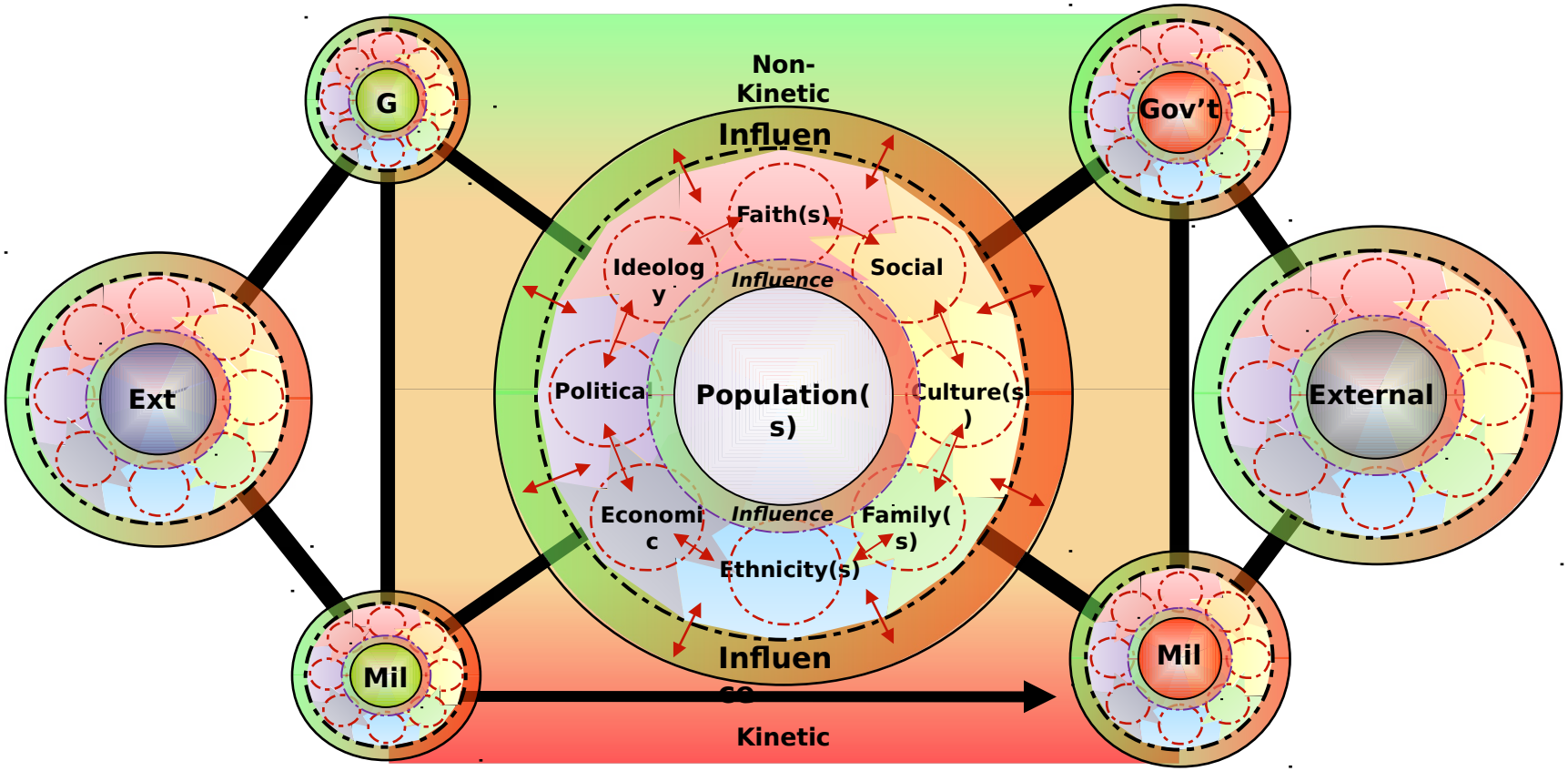


The Afghan COIN Kaleidoscope



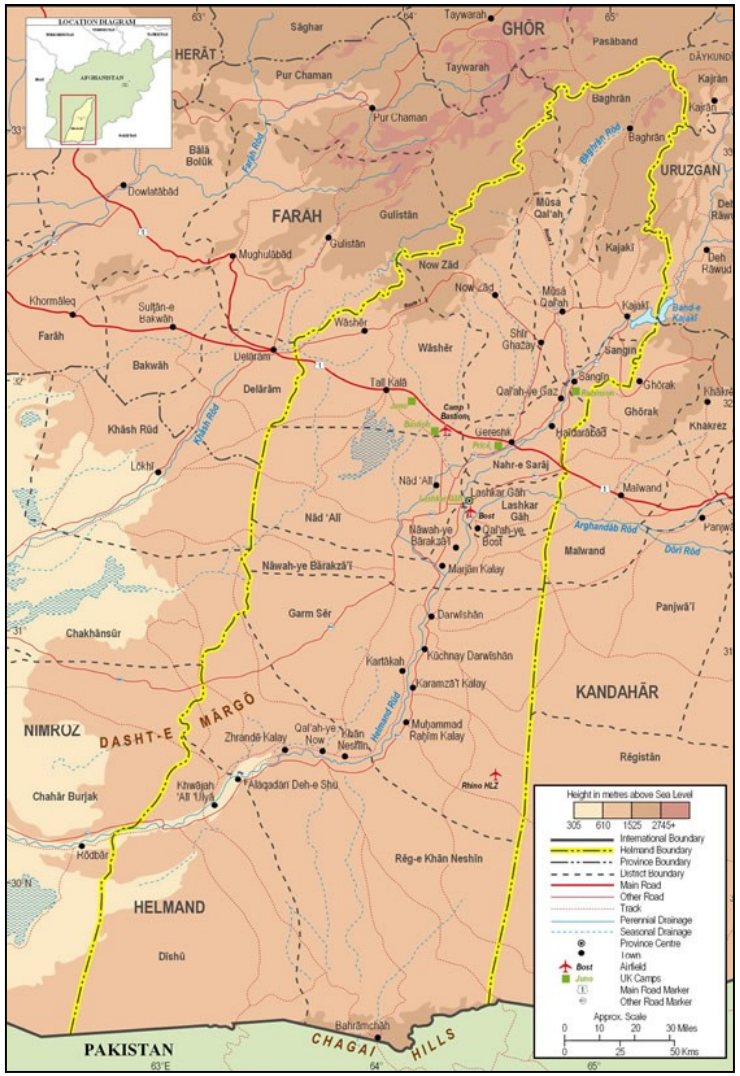
Afghan COIN Equation?

INS < GOVS + ∞(POPS) + SyF

OR

INS + ∞(POPS) > GOV + SyF

Study: UK Experience in Helmand



Afghanistan *(01-ongoing)*:

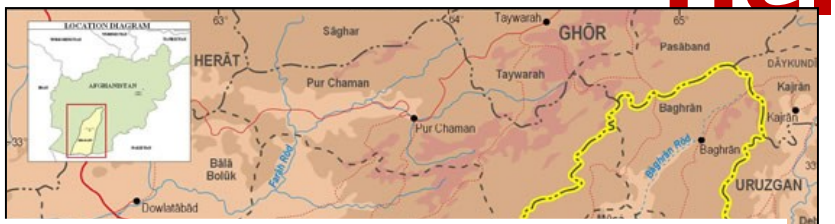
- Op HERRICK formally commenced in 2002
- UK deployed 4000 Tps to HELMAND in Apr 06
- 'The most intense fighting since Korea'
- **'**Campaign will last for years, perhaps decades'
- 'Fighting in the south between the Taleban and British troops had reached a stalemate, in which neither side could progress much without the introduction of more American troops'
- 'Ineffective cross-gov't coordination'
- 'Fundamental failings in the British approach'
- 'Even in the absence of adequate resources, British commanders chose to

Study: UK Experience in Helmand

‘If you’re going to conduct an operation, you’re doing it for one reason - to succeed. Don’t let’s do it with one arm tied behind one’s back. There didn’t seem to be sufficient acceptance, even in all parts of the MoD, let alone right across government, that our military needed to be properly supported in all the tasks it was being asked to do. One’s had to have the government at times screaming and kicking to agree to some of the things that we felt passionately about ’

Gen Sir Richard Dannatt
Former Chief of General Staff
7 October 2009

Study: UK Experience in Helmand



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- **Learn & adapt**

Op HERRICK Criticisms: *(2006-2010)*:

- **Military operational focus**:
  - Limited Comprehensive Approach
  - Tactical rather than strategic
  - Still too kinetic in its approach
- **Lack of campaign continuity**:
  - Brigade-centric operational focus
  - Cyclic 6-monthly peaks and troughs
  - CLEAR, but minimal HOLD or BUILD
- **Military task-organisation**:
  - Troop numbers (from *4000* to *9500*)
  - Dispersal (*join the dots vice ink-spots*)
  - Lack of equipment support
- **British military culture**:
  - Inter-Unit/Service ethos and

Conclusions

- **The British military <u>had</u> an enviable COIN reputation**
- **The Empire's clothes are not entirely new**
- **The Insurgent Equation has changed**
- **The 'British COIN Model' is not the panacea**
- **Must use extant resources to counter insurgency**

Questions